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STATE FOR WHA/CAR (BENT)

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [JM](#)
SUBJECT: THE NEW PRIME MINISTER'S CABINET

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Classified By: Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Thomas C. Tighe, f
or reason 1.5(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. This message provides biographic sketches on members of new Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller and her Cabinet, which she announced at midnight on March 31. Apparently, in order to build party unity before the next general elections believed to be forthcoming by Fall 2006, the Prime Minister decided not to make significant changes to the Cabinet. Consequently, her Cabinet largely mirrors that of her predecessor, former Prime Minister PJ Patterson, with the following changes: Dean Peart was formerly Minister of Land and Environment and now he is Local Government and Environment; the Land portfolio has been transferred to Roger Clarke who retained his previous Agriculture portfolio; Horace Dalley was previously the Minister of Labor and Social Security and is now the Minister of Health; Anthony Hylton, Derrick Kellier and Collin Campbell were not members of the previous Cabinet; the Prime Minister has retained the Sport portfolio and has added Defense and Women's Affairs. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) At midnight on March 31, just hours after being sworn in as Jamaica's seventh Prime Minister, Portia Simpson Miller announced the 14 members of her Cabinet. Following are biographic capsules on the new Prime Minister and the members of her Cabinet.

Prime Minister: Portia Lucretia Simpson Miller

[1](#)3. (U) Simpson Miller was elected president of the People's National Party (PNP) in February 2006 and became Prime Minister of Jamaica on March 30 (Ref A). Most recently she was Minister of Local Government, Community Development and Sport, but she has also held the Labor portfolio. Simpson Miller has retained the Sport portfolio and has added Defense and Women's Affairs to her responsibilities.

[1](#)4. (C) The new Prime Minister served as Peoples National Party (PNP) Vice President (1987-2006), and as President of the PNP Women's Movement since 1983. She has also served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister. She was first elected to Parliament in 1976, and has served on the National Executive Council, the Executive Council and as a Councilor in the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC). A powerful public speaker and a talented political organizer, Simpson Miller also has wildly popular grassroots support. However, her underprivileged background and lack of distinguished advanced degrees have brought criticism from some in the middle- and upper class, including her own

party members, particularly K.D. Knight, who stepped down as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade shortly before Simpson Miller took office as Prime Minister. Simpson Miller has a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) in Public Administration from Union Institute in Miami, a Certificate in Public Relations and an Advanced Management Certificate from the Jamaica Institute of Management (JIM). She also completed the Executive Program for Leaders in Development at John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Born on December 12, 1945 in Woodhall, St. Catherine, Jamaica, Simpson Miller was one of eight children and grew up in relative poverty. She is married to Errald Miller, former president of Cable and Wireless Jamaica.

15. (C) Simpson Miller's Kingston inner-city constituency of St. Andrew SW is impoverished and considered a heavily "garrisoned" community. The new PM has spoken out publicly and privately against corruption, but she may well have to take the difficult step of acting against some of her longtime political supporters in order to give credibility to these statements.

National Security: Peter Phillips

16. (C) The new Prime Minister retained Peter Phillips - her closest and fiercest rival during the PNP campaign - as Minister of National Security despite calls by critics to replace him due to the persistence of high rates of violent crime during his watch. Embassy Kingston and the UK and Canadian High Commissions shared the concern that Simpson Miller would replace Phillips with Commerce Minister Phillip Paulwell, and shared relief that, at least for now, she has not.

17. (C) Phillips became Minister of National Security in November 2001 and has been aggressive in attacking Jamaica's persistent drug and crime problems. In the February 2006 PNP elections, he was favored to succeed as President of the party, but he came in a close second to Portia Simpson Miller (Ref B). Phillips has been Member of Parliament for East Central St. Andrew since 1994. Despite his Achilles heel of high crime rates, he is generally perceived to be an effective minister and a capable PNP administrator. Phillips is pragmatic and has worked well Embassy Kingston, for which some in his own party criticize him.

18. (C) Phillips was named to the Senate in 1989, served as Junior Minister, PNP General Secretary, Minister without Portfolio, Health Minister, Minister with Responsibility for Electoral Matters, and Transport and Works Minister. In 1970, Phillips received a BA in sociology and political science and a masters degree in international relations (1977) from the University of the West Indies. He received a Ford Foundation scholarship (1977-1981) and a Fulbright Fellowship (1984 -1985). Phillips also has a doctorate in sociology from the State University of New York at Binghamton (1985). Phillips was born on December 28, 1949 in Kingston, Jamaica. Phillips has written several academic articles on international political and economic relations. He enjoys jogging, reading, listening to music, and playing squash. In addition to English, Phillips speaks some Spanish. Phillips is married to his second wife, Sandra Minott, who was born in Ireland. They have two sons, and Phillips also has four children from his previous marriage to a Rastafarian.

Foreign Affairs: George Anthony Hylton

19. (C) George Anthony "Tony" Hylton was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Hylton was not a serving member of parliament and, therefore, was appointed senator in order to be given cabinet portfolio. Hylton previously served as Minister of Foreign Trade (February 2000 - December 2001). He served previously as a Member of Parliament for Western St. Thomas and as Parliamentary Secretary at the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. He was promoted to Minister of State in April 1997 in recognition of the growing importance of his international trade portfolio and served as one of former Prime Minister P.J. Patterson's top aides.

¶10. (C) Hylton has a BA in Political Science from Morgan State University in Baltimore, a law degree from Georgetown University, and a diploma in air and space law from the University of London. At Georgetown, Hylton became a legal assistant for a Washington lobbying organization. He practiced law in Baltimore, and later in New York (1987-1989) and in Washington (1989), specializing in international corporate law and commercial litigation. He returned to Jamaica in 1989. Having migrated to the U.S. with his family in the mid-1970's, Hylton has a good understanding of American society. Hylton held a U.S. Legal Permanent Resident card as the spouse of a U.S. citizen, but quietly surrendered it for political reasons soon after joining Simpson Miller's Cabinet. Hylton was born on April 27, 1957 in Yallahs, St. Thomas, Jamaica.

Finance: Omar Davies

¶11. (C) Omar Davies remains Minister of Finance and Planning. He is a credible and effective minister and was considered the private sector's preferred choice to replace Patterson. However, on February 25 he came in a distant third to Prime Minister Simpson Miller. Davies was re-elected to his South St. Andrew parliament seat by the largest margin of any candidate in 2002, 95 percent. Although he has no formal economics training, Davies is an astute spokesperson who staunchly defends the government's economic policies and is skilled at explaining government positions. Davies is considered a serious and demanding boss whose underlings jump at his command.

¶12. (C) In 2001, Davies came under intense public scrutiny when he offered a eulogy at the funeral of a notorious South St. Andrew drug gang leader, Willie Haggart. In March 2005, it was revealed that the Ministry of Finance used deferred financing to support development projects without going to Parliament for approval (Ref C). Some in the Ministry of Finance believe the timing of the disclosure was politically motivated and designed to hurt Davies in his campaign for Prime Minister. Parliament discovered the Ministry of Finance's illegal practice, which increased GOJ debt obligations by more than JD 19 billion (USD 300 million). In hearings before Parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials admitted that they knowingly broke the law.

¶13. (U) Davies received Masters of Science and Ph.D. degrees from Northwestern University in Urban Planning. He also has a BA in geography and mathematics from the University of the West Indies. Davies has also taught at Stanford University and at the University of the West Indies. In addition, he is a newspaper columnist and weekly radio commentator, and a consultant to several international organizations. Born on May 28, 1947, Davies is married and has two daughters and a son. Though their names are spelled differently, Davies has two brothers in public service. Dr. Carlton Davis has been Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service since 1993. Dr. Rae Davis is a former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and is President of the University of Technology.

Transportation: Robert Pickersgill

¶14. (C) Robert "Bobby" Pickersgill is widely considered a mediocre administrator who likely benefited from Simpson Miller's plan not to significantly change the Cabinet before the upcoming election. Pickersgill retained his Cabinet post under P.J. Patterson despite his shortcomings because of his strong loyalty to the former Prime Minister and his key role in overseeing party affairs as chairman of the PNP. Road projects with cost overruns, missed deadlines, and questionable financing arrangements have characterized Pickersgill's tenure at the Transport Ministry.

¶15. (U) Pickersgill has had responsibility for three different Ministries since he was elected Member of Parliament for North Western St. Catherine and appointed to the Cabinet in 1989. He served as Minister of Mining and Energy (1998-2001), Minister of Public Utilities, Transport and Energy (1995-1998), and Minister of Transport (1989-1993)(2002-current). After graduating from the University of the West Indies in 1966 with a degree in education, Pickersgill became a high school teacher. He later trained locally as a lawyer, passed the English Solicitors Examination, and is a partner in the law firm of Knight, Pickersgill, Dowding and Samuels. Born on February 26, 1943, in Kingston, Jamaica, Pickersgill is divorced with no children. His interests include tennis, swimming and dancing.

Education: Maxine Henry-Willson

¶16. (U) Despite having supported Peter Phillips' unsuccessful campaign, Maxine Henry-Wilson remains Minister of Education Youth and Culture. She was first elected as a Member of Parliament in 2002 for south East St. Andrew. She is an avid believer in education as a tool for change and expresses her view that, "a nation that is well learned is a nation with greater capacity to stand on its own."

¶17. (C) Henry-Willson served as PNP General Secretary and has been credited with assisting the party's victories in 1997 and in 2002. She was also Minister of Information from 2000-2001, before giving up the portfolio to focus on the 2002 general election. She is a former Minister Without Portfolio (1994-2000), Junior Minister of Finance (1993) and Junior Minister in the Prime Minister's Office (1992). Embodiments were impressed with Henry-Wilson as Information Minister and as Campaign Manager for the 2002 general election. Henry-Wilson is seen as capable, organized and cooperative with the US Embassy. She is an excellent communicator. Henry-Wilson earned BA and Masters degrees from the University of the West Indies, and a Masters degree from Rutgers. Henry-Wilson taught Public Policy at UWI, and is seen as a good fit for the Minister of Education position. Born February 1, 1952, in Manchester, Jamaica, Henry-Willson is married and has one daughter.

Agriculture and Land: Roger Clark

¶18. (C) Roger Clark is the Minister of Agriculture and Land. Clarke was Minister of Agriculture (1997-2006). When Prime Minister Simpson Miller appointed him to her Cabinet, she added Land to his previous Agriculture portfolio. Clarke first entered national level politics in September 1991, when he was elected to fill the NE St. Elizabeth Member of Parliament seat left vacant by the death of PNP stalwart, Sydney Pagon. He was made junior Minister of Agriculture in 1992 and Minister of Local Government and PNP Vice President in 1995, a position he lost, to his evident surprise and immense public embarrassment, in 2004. Clarke is a former president of the St. Elizabeth Jamaica Agricultural Society Branches and the Association of Local Government Authorities. He also served on the boards of the National Water Commission, the Rural Electrification Program and the National Library Board.

¶19. (U) Born in Westmoreland in 1940, Clark is a farmer by trade. His extensive agricultural background includes managing major estates such as Appleton, as well as his own sugar cane farm in St. Elizabeth. He is a down to earth and open Minister. Clarke graduated from Mannings High School, Savannah-La-Mar. He is married, and has one son and one daughter.

Attorney General and Justice: A.J. Nicholson

¶20. (C) A.J. Nicholson remains Attorney General and Minister of Justice and has been newly appointed as Leader of Government Business in the Senate. In 1989, Nicholson was elected to Parliament for West Central St. Andrew parish. He

is seen as arrogant and imperious in public, but is affable, easy-going, cooperative and accepting of divergent views in private. After earning a BA in economics from the University of the West Indies, Nicholson studied law at the University of London. He has worked in the banking industry and in private law practice. Born February 28, 1942, in Rock River, Clarendon, Nicholson is married and has two sons.

Local Government and Environment: Dean Peart

¶21. (C) Dean Alexander Peart was appointed Minister of Local Government and Environment. Peart was previously Minister of Land and Environment (2002-2006) and Minister for Transport and Works (2001-2002). Dean Peart has also served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Labor Ministry, Junior Minister of Industry and Commerce, Junior Minister of Local Government, Youth and Sports, Junior Minister of Local Government and Works, and Junior Minister for Transport and Works.

¶22. (U) Peart was educated at West Indies College. His father was a PNP Minister and High Commissioner to London. His brother, Michael Peart, won the Southern Manchester seat in the October 2002 election, and is Speaker of the House. Born in Mandeville on May 7, 1949, Peart is married with five children.

Industry, Commerce and Science: Phillip Paulwell

¶23. (C) Phillip Paulwell remains Minister of Industry, Commerce, Science and Technology a position he has held since ¶2002. Following Simpson Miller's victory, Paulwell sat in on her meetings with U.S., UK and Canadian diplomats on national security issues leading to concern that he would be named National Security Minister. Paulwell is believed to associate with known or suspected criminals, and he has a probably valid reputation of involvement in illicit activities. He was behind a 2005 blockage of incoming international phone calls to pressure U.S. and international carriers to accede to a unilateral, GOJ-imposed tax. Paulwell has attempted to foster a modern, competitive telecommunications sector as a means to jump-start Jamaica's economy. He consistently emphasizes a desire to expand trade and investment ties to the U.S. In 1995, Paulwell was appointed Senator representing Kingston and minister of state for Commerce and Technology. Until 2001, Paulwell was considered an outside contender to succeed Prime Minister P.J. Patterson. However, when Paulwell's ministry was involved in inappropriately approving a US \$4 million loan for Netserv, a global communications services company, before its 2001 collapse, his political star dimmed considerably. Despite calls for Paulwell's resignation after the scandal, however, former PM Patterson stood by him, and Paulwell's backing of Simpson Miller's campaign may have given new life to his political aspirations.

¶24. (U) In 1986, Paulwell earned a law degree from the University of the West Indies and a certificate in legal education from the Norman Manley Law School in 1988. He became a lawyer in 1988. Born in 1962, Paulwell is divorced from his second wife, a former Miss Jamaica, and he has one teenage daughter.

Tourism, Entertainment and Culture: Aloun N'Dombet-Assamba

¶25. (U) Aloun N'Dombet Assamba was appointed Minister of Tourism, Entertainment and Culture. Assamba held the position of Minister of Industry and Tourism (2002-2006). Previously she had managed the City of Kingston Credit Union, before being appointed as a Senator and Junior Industry, Commerce and Technology Minister. Assamba served as Member of Parliament for South East St. Ann.

¶26. (C) After studying law at the University of the West Indies and Norman Manley Law School, Assamba attended the University of Pittsburgh for a one-year fellowship. Born February 27, 1955, in St. Catherine, Jamaica, Assamba is described as high-energy, professional, and a capable performer committed to excellence. She is divorced and has one son. Assamba has suffered health problems recently, and has been out of the limelight for treatment.

Health: Horace Washington Dalley

¶27. (C) Horace Washington Dalley was appointed Minister of Health, having served previously as Minister of Labor, where he was considered a weak performer. Dalley is a Member of Parliament for Northern Clarendon. He has made public comments on the need for dictator-type measures to address Jamaica's rising crime. Originally from the left wing of the PNP that worked closely with Cuba in the 1970s, Dalley has moved toward the center. He jokes privately about the failure of more doctrinaire party members, such as his former boss, Donald Buchanan, to keep up with the times. Dalley has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Jamaican TCN labor program at Guantanamo Bay as well as the H2B visa programs under which thousands of Jamaicans participate in seasonal jobs in the U.S. agriculture and resort industries. A teacher by profession, Dalley has been the International Secretary of the PNP. He was Technical Attach at the

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Jamaican Embassy in Cuba in the 1970s. Born in Mitchell Town, Clarendon in 1955, Daley attended Mico Teachers, College. He has two daughters, and he speaks Spanish.

Labor and Social Security: Derrick Kellier

¶28. (U) Derrick Kellier was appointed Minister of Labor and Social Security. Kellier, previously, Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, represents Southern St. James as Member of Parliament for the PNP. Mr. Kellier served as Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister, and as Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government, Youth and Community Development. A farmer and a businessman, Kellier is a former Chairman of the PNP Youth Organization, and a member of the National Executive Council.

¶29. (U) Kellier, born May 27, 1947, attended Calabar High School and is a baptist who enjoys playing music, dominoes and cricket. Kellier is married to Claudia Kellier and has four children.

Information and Development: Collin Campbell

¶30. (U) Collin Campbell was appointed Minister of Information and Development. Like Hylton, he is not a member of parliament, and, consequently, was appointed senator in order to be given a Cabinet portfolio. Campbell was former Minister of Information in Patterson's administration; however, in 2002 when he lost his seat in Parliament to Dr. St. Aubyn Bartlett of the Jamaica Labor Party, he also lost his cabinet ministry.

¶31. (C) A communications consultant and former journalist, Campbell has extensive local public relations and media contacts. He was a leftist activist during the 1970,s, and was identified as an "up and comer" after he won the 1993 elections, toppling the then Deputy Leader of the JLP to become a first-time Member of Parliament for the PNP in the Eastern St. Andrew constituency. In 1980, Campbell worked as press secretary to former Prime Minister, the late Michael Manley, with whom he was very close. Born on February 27, 1955, in Mandeville, Jamaica, Campbell did his post-secondary schooling (2 years) in Sydney, Australia. Campbell is married and has two sons.

